

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 720

By Yager

A RESOLUTION to honor and recognize the Singing Cookes on the occasion of their 50th anniversary.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pay tribute to those inspirational musical artists who spread a message of love and hope through uplifting gospel music; and

WHEREAS, the Singing Cookes are one such exemplary music group, who will be celebrating fifty years of singing the Gospel in true Southern style; and

WHEREAS, leaving behind his sixteen-year career in the Virginia coal mines, Hubert Cooke and his wife, Jeannette, formed the Cooke Duet in 1962; and

WHEREAS, with two guitars, a love of bluegrass, and their lifelong Christian faith to guide them, the duo reveled in the spirit of church revivals led by Jeannette's father, Reverend Gordon Freeman; and

WHEREAS, as the Cooke Duet toured from town to town, growing in popularity, their sons developed an enthusiasm for the band's mission and wished to join their parents in spreading the Word through music; and

WHEREAS, with their oldest son, James, on bass guitar, Ronny on keyboard, and Donny on drums, the Cooke Duet officially became the Singing Cookes; and

WHEREAS, the family band met instantaneous success with their first national release, "He Rows Me Over the Tide" and continued this tradition with hits like "Moses", which climbed to #3 on the southern gospel charts, "Earth's Loss Is Heaven's Gain", which hit #10, and "I Hope We Walk the Last Mile Together", which reached #14; the two latter tracks appeared on the #1 album in the Gospel Voice Distributors Top Sales Chart; and

WHEREAS, after many years with the Singing Cookes, James, Ronny, and Donny formed their own group, the Cooke Brothers, and the dynamic trio achieved great success with hits like “Chiseled in Stone” and “Go Rest High on that Mountain”; and

WHEREAS, carrying on the family tradition in the next generation is Donny’s son, Daniel Cooke, who recently recorded “He Was Thinking of Me” on the Cooke Brothers Project CB-14 “Driving Nails” and who has contributed guitar backing on many songs by both the Singing Cookes and the Cooke Brothers; and

WHEREAS, the Singing Cookes, along with the Cooke Brothers, have shared their musical ministry with audiences all over the western hemisphere, across the country and throughout Canada and the British Virgin Islands; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that we should recognize this devout family for bringing the Christian message of love, faith, and human kindness into the lives of music lovers for fifty joyful years; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and commend the Singing Cookes for their dedication to the Christian mission of spreading God’s love through music and their many accomplishments in the gospel music industry, congratulate them upon the occasion of their fiftieth anniversary, and extend to them our best wishes for every future success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.